**Introduction**

**Land of the Blues**

The Mississippi Delta is the geographical region between the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers that was formed by thousands of years of annual floods that made it one of the flattest places in the country. Culturally, economically, and racially this region is set apart from the rest of Mississippi and the rest of the south. It was in this unique region that the Delta Blues began.

The US Census provides county migration data which was used to determine movement in and out of the Delta and the Non-Delta region. The destination and departure counties for every person who moved between 1990 and 2000 were used to determine movement in and out of the Delta and Non-Delta.

**Methods**

The US Census migration data counts and lists the departure and arrival county of every person who moved across county borders between 1990 and 2000. In Microsoft Excel, the tables were isolated for Delta and Non-Delta arrivals as well as Delta and Non-Delta departures. For each Mississippi county the corresponding US Counties were aggregated to get a count of total arrivals and departures for each county. The organized data was then joined to an ArcGIS shapefile for US counties so that the results could be mapped and analyzed.

**Mississippi Senders and Receivers**

**Senders**

These maps are county representations of the total number of migrants that each Mississippi county sent and received between 1990 and 2000. The counties that are sending counties in MS are almost exclusively the counties with higher populations such as in and around Jackson, MS. The other rural areas experience very little amounts of emigration possibly due to poverty.

In the map of the receivers, it is clear that migration is very minimal into the Delta and occurs almost exclusively outside of the Delta.

**US County Senders and Receivers**

**Persons Leaving the Delta**

This map shows all the counties that more than 500 people from the Delta have moved to between 1990 and 2000. The top counties are Shelby, Tennessee and Hinds, Mississippi, shown in the graph below. Shelby County, directly north of the Delta, is where the city of Memphis is located. The capital of Mississippi, Jackson is in Hinds County. These two cities are the closest large cities to the Delta. The next most popular destination outside of Mississippi is Cook County, home of Chicago. There has been a strong link between Mississippi and Chicago since the early 1900’s during the Great Migration when many African Americans migrated north to escape racism and seek employment.

**Persons Leaving the Non-Delta**

The corresponding map and graph show the destinations for those moving out of the Non-Delta in Mississippi. Most migrants stay within Mississippi or go to cities close by, such as Memphis in Shelby County and Mobile, Alabama. Similar to Delta migrants, a connection with Chicago is obvious. However, fewer migrants from the Non-Delta move north and more move to western and eastern states than from the Delta. The yellow/orange color scheme in this map signifies the percent of total Non-Delta migrants that move to each US county.

**Persons Moving to the Delta**

This map shows the original counties of those who moved to the Delta. Many moved from within Mississippi, but a significant number came from Louisiana. Between 1990 and 2000, 16,000 migrants moved to the Delta. There is also a significant number moving to the Delta and Non-Delta from Southern California and the Las Vegas area.

**Persons Moving to the Non-Delta**

This map shows the counties that the migrants to the Delta came from. Many of the counties are the same as the ones that Delta migrants move to, showing a stronger link between the counties. The vast majority of migrants to the Delta come from Memphis, shown in the graph below. Although people move to the Delta from many places throughout the US, a relatively small number come from counties outside Mississippi. It’s interesting to note that people are moving to both the Delta and the Non-Delta from counties in the Northeast, yet very few Mississippians move to these places.

**Summary**

The region of the Mississippi Delta is unique in many ways, both physically and culturally. An analysis of migration data provided by the US Census shows another aspect of the Delta. By county, fewer people are migrating to the Delta region than the Non-Delta region. Although most migrants in Mississippi stay within the state or move to nearby cities in other states, such as Memphis, some counties stand out more than others. The most evident connection is between Chicago and Mississippi, a relationship that continues to exist since the Great Migration.